



PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$620,000 to Over 50 Massachusetts Companies to Catalyze Export Activity

State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) awards will help Massachusetts small businesses access new markets.

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Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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FITCHBURG, MA — The Baker-Polito Administration announced the awardees for the State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP), which provides resources to small businesses to pursue export activities and increase sales overseas. This year, more than 50 companies will receive nearly \$623,000, and the Massachusetts Export Center will receive funding to provide training to small businesses and enable companies to participate in select overseas trade shows. Since 2015, the administration has awarded more than \$1.3 million through the STEP program, which has helped companies realize more than \$46 million in export sales.

“Our administration is committed to helping small businesses thrive, create jobs and contribute to the economy in Massachusetts,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “The STEP program is a great opportunity for Massachusetts small businesses to access capital, enter new markets, and grow their operations.”

“Massachusetts small businesses drive regional economies and create exciting products with global demand,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. “Today’s awards will provide funding and assistance to Massachusetts small businesses and help create opportunities to increase sales overseas. Programs like STEP help small businesses pursue every opportunity by leveraging state, federal, and private funding.”

The STEP grants are funded in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and administered in cooperation with the Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment (MOITI) and the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center/Massachusetts Export Center. The STEP grants support export activities such as trade show participation, overseas marketing and localization services, and subscription services from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

“Last spring, we hosted 10 small business listening sessions across the Commonwealth to better understand the challenges of small business owners,” **said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash**. “We learned about the critical importance of access to capital for small businesses, so they can build on their successes, fuel new growth and expand their reach within Massachusetts, and beyond. We continue to develop and promote matching grants to federal programs like STEP, the Small Business Innovation Research program, and the Small Business Technology Transfer program to ensure Massachusetts small businesses can access high-impact capital.”

MOITI and the Massachusetts Export Center selected applications in a competitive process based on feasibility and export readiness, with priority given to new-to-export firms looking to expand into the global marketplace. Additionally, small businesses are required to commit private funding towards export activities. Grantees are encouraged to use market research and export assistance services provided through the Export Center to ensure the highest return on investment.

“The STEP program has been very successful and popular here in the Commonwealth for several years and we are excited with the announcement of the most recent \$500,000 award from the SBA,” **said Bob**

Nelson, SBA MA District Director. “Most of our exporters are small businesses and being able to leverage federal funds with state and private funds to help expand international sales is a tremendous opportunity.”

“The STEP Grant program is a key resource for exporting firms,” **said Nam Pham, Assistant Secretary of Business Development.** “MOITI is grateful to the SBA and our state and federal partners for their continued commitment to the Commonwealth’s small businesses.”

“The STEP grant enables Massachusetts businesses to engage in targeted, high-impact activities to increase export sales,” **said Paula Murphy, Director of the Massachusetts Export Center.** “We look forward to working with this year’s awardees to ensure that they succeed in global markets.”

For more information on the STEP program and services provided by the Export Center visit www.mass.gov/export/step.

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